Strategic Plan 2014-2018

BRITISH COLUMBIA
ARTS COUNCIL
An agency of the Province of British Columbia

INTRODUCTION

The BC Arts Council is pleased to present its Strategic Plan: 2014-2018. This plan will serve to guide the Council's development of policy and program priorities as it strives to support the creative and innovative capacity of the arts and cultural community and represent the interests of the creative sector.

Arts and culture are integral in British Columbia, contributing significantly to culturally-rich communities with sustainable jobs, economic growth, and vibrant social fabrics. The impact of the creative sector on individuals, communities and the province is immeasurable. The Council is firmly committed to supporting the artistic excellence of British Columbia's talented artists and important arts and cultural organizations, that:

- Encourage participation in artistic and creative activity;
- Improve quality of life and social cohesion;
- Develop, attract and retain skilled and innovative thinkers for the creative sector;
- Foster community identity and a sense of place; and
- Contribute to local, regional and provincial economies.

The BC Arts Council has the opportunity to support artists and arts and culture organizations as they remain flexible and adaptive while responding to economic constraints, rapidly developing technology, and shifting demographics.

The global economic environment remains fragile, and although well-positioned, British Columbia is not immune to the economic challenges this presents. Despite the prolonged economic downturn, in 2013-2014 the government of British Columbia provided the Council with $24 million, the largest annual grants budget in the Council's history. This significant new investment enhances the Council's capacity to support the arts and culture sector, provides opportunities to review funding levels for core programs, and allows the exploration of new initiatives, such as programs that enhance youth engagement in the arts and build capacity and resilience in the sector.

In addition to the prolonged economic downturn, the continuous and rapid evolution of new technologies is a constant reality presenting both new challenges and new opportunities. These changes have the potential to affect all aspects of artistic practice and management, from new approaches to creation and presentation to transformed business models.

Communities in British Columbia are also shifting at a rapid pace and arts and culture organizations are adapting to changing demographics and audiences to remain relevant. Audiences are becoming increasingly diverse, and artists and organizations are adjusting to embrace a wider range of cultural perspectives, art forms and generations while continuing to promote collaboration across disciplines and practices.

In the face of all this change, now is the time to put a stronger emphasis on the next generation of creative, collaborative and innovative artists and citizens. In January, 2013, the government announced BC Creative Futures, a comprehensive strategy to promote youth engagement with the arts and to help prepare young British Columbians for rewarding careers in the creative sector. Creative Futures relies upon the talents and expertise of British Columbia's arts and culture community to mentor, nurture and inspire the next generation.

Although much has changed since the previous plan was written, the Council holds firm to the goals it set out as aspirations for the coming years. These goals and strategies will help position the BC Arts Council to continue to advocate on behalf of the arts and culture community and to support artists and organizations as they increase their resiliency, dynamism and flexibility.

ABOUT THE BC ARTS COUNCIL

MISSION

Engage all British Columbians in a healthy arts and cultural community that is recognized for excellence.

MANDATE

The BC Arts Council is an agency of the provincial government established by the *Arts Council Act*, for the purposes of:

(a) providing support for arts and culture in British Columbia;
(b) providing persons and organizations with the opportunity to participate in the arts and culture in British Columbia; and
(c) providing an open, accountable and neutrally administered process for managing funds for British Columbia arts and culture.

The Council's Board is comprised of a maximum of 15 appointed members selected for their expertise and dedication to the arts. Members represent the regions, cultural diversity, and artistic communities of British Columbia.

The operations, programs and initiatives of the BC Arts Council are executed by knowledgeable and committed staff from the Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development.

CORE VALUES

The vision and goals of the BC Arts Council are guided by the following six core values:

Artistic Excellence:

Foster the development and support the achievements of individual artists and arts and cultural organizations, including those with diverse voices across diverse practices, throughout British Columbia.

Recognition:

Acknowledge and promote the work of British Columbia's artists.

Access:

Provide the opportunity for all British Columbians to actively engage and participate in the arts.

Aboriginal Engagement:

Embrace Aboriginal culture and heritage and celebrate its ongoing connection to the lives of all British Columbians.

Consultation:

Work collaboratively and creatively with artists and cultural communities throughout the province to develop new initiatives and improve existing programs.

Governance:

Use fair and transparent processes that adhere to principles of accountability, independence, merit and equity.

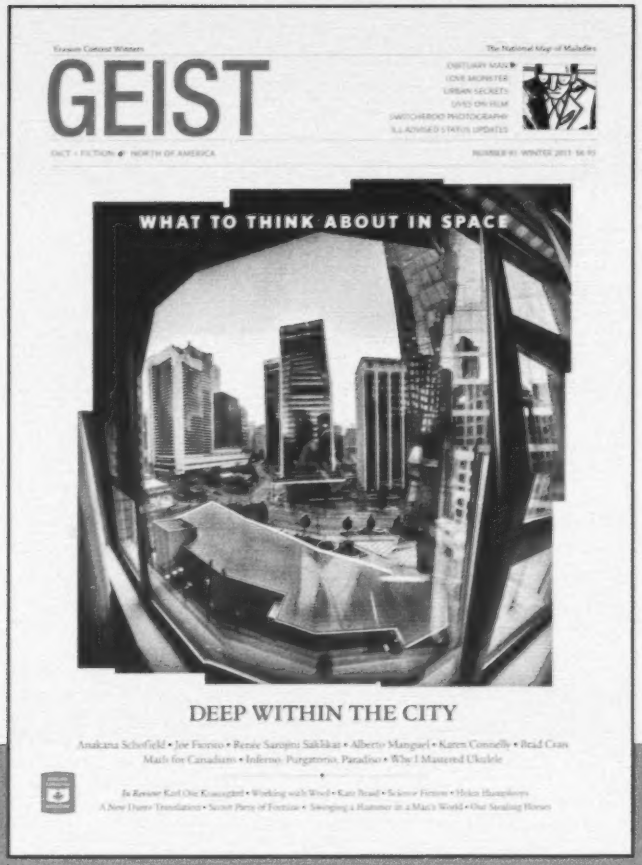
GOAL 1:

FOSTER ARTISTIC EXCELLENCE IN ALL ART FORMS AND PRACTICES

STRATEGIES

1. Invest resources in artistic exploration and innovation.
2. Encourage a broad-based appreciation of the breadth and depth of artistic excellence in our province.
3. Strengthen the capacity of arts and cultural organizations and individual artists throughout the province to further their artistic achievement.
4. Support opportunities for skills training and participation in the creation, exhibition and performance of art.
5. Create opportunities for the next generation of artists.

Nancy Allen Lundy as Lan in Vancouver Opera's production of Tea: A Mirror of Soul. (2013). Photo: Tim Matheson



Geist Cover. Cover design Eric Uhlich
Cover Image: 7th Floor Window
by Mandelbrot

GOAL 2:

STRENGTHEN ENGAGEMENT IN THE ARTS

STRATEGIES

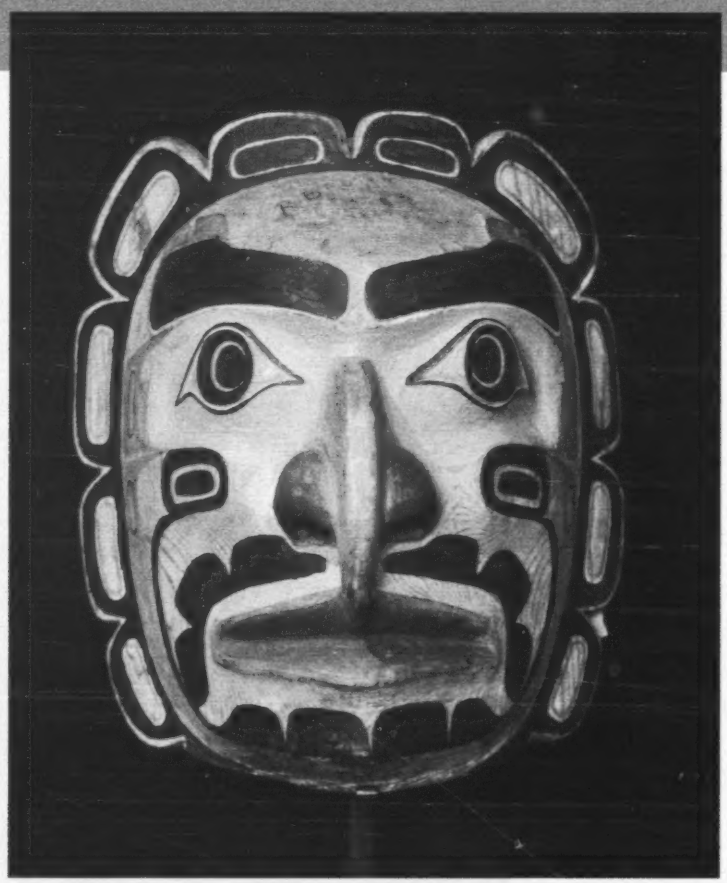
1. Increase opportunities for all British Columbians to participate in the arts.
2. Provide leadership to increase the vitality of community engagement.
3. Build awareness of the contribution that arts and culture make to British Columbians' quality of life.
4. Strengthen relationships and build partnerships with other sectors including health, education, tourism, social services, business, and governments.
5. Build youth engagement in the arts.

GOAL 3:

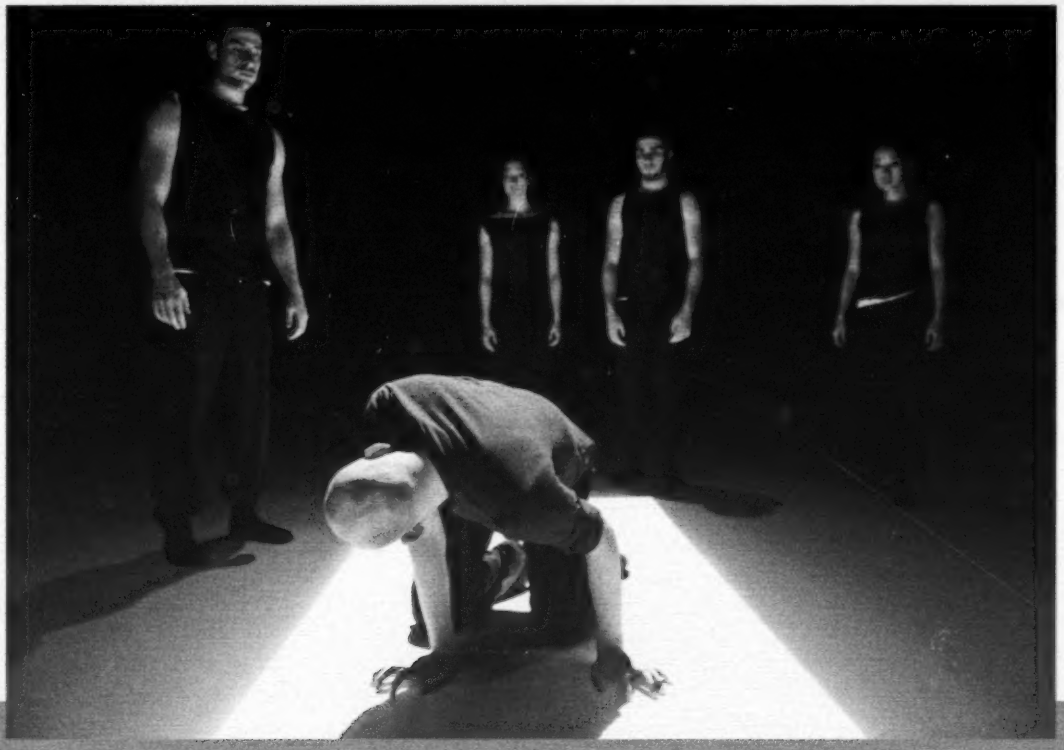
SUPPORT THE RICHNESS OF ABORIGINAL ARTISTS AND COMMUNITIES IN BRITISH COLUMBIA

STRATEGIES

1. Give thanks for and acknowledge the contribution of Aboriginal artists and culture.
2. In consultation with the Aboriginal community, create opportunities for Aboriginal artists and arts and cultural organizations to participate in a full range of artistic and cultural activities.
3. Strengthen Aboriginal organizations' existing and developing connections across and within the broader cultural community.
4. Provide culturally appropriate support and financial assistance for Aboriginal artists and cultural organizations.



Sun Mask
Courtesy of U'mista Cultural Society
Photo: Christina Cook, Sabalxis



Josh Martin, Renée Sigouin, Diego Romero, Jung-Ah Chung, and Wen Wei Wang (front) in Wen Wei Dance's production of 7th Sense Photo: Chris Randle

GOAL 4:

ENHANCE SUPPORT FOR ARTS AND CULTURE IN BRITISH COLUMBIA

STRATEGIES

1. Advocate for stronger support for artists and arts and cultural organizations.
2. Increase awareness of and access to Council's programs.
3. Enhance relationships between the Council, artists, and arts and cultural organizations.
4. Work with partners and supporters to enhance the Council's resources.
5. Explore new models and ideas to build adaptive capacity and dynamic flexibility in the arts and culture sector.

STRATEGIC PLAN CONSULTATION

The 2014-2018 plan was developed by the BC Arts Council Board in consultation with its stakeholders through:

- An online survey with more than 500 respondents reflecting a cross-section of disciplines, community interests, age groups and experience in the arts;
- Facilitated sessions with Advisory Committee members;
- Consultation with BC Arts Council staff; and
- Consideration of strategic plans from other provincial arts funders and the Canada Council for the Arts.

The 2013 survey results, coupled with some important shifts affecting arts and culture, clearly called for changes to be adopted in the 2014-2018 strategic plan of the Council. Through the process of revising the strategic plan, the Council has incorporated many of the excellent suggestions from stakeholders. As a result of the feedback, this plan aims to clarify the previously stated goals and create more focused strategies to achieve them.

The Council recognizes the opportunity to respond to the sector's challenges and aims to help facilitate the shift to a culture of adaptability and collaboration. Overall, the objective is to ensure that the sector remains relevant, resilient and sustainable in this changing environment while maintaining excellence in artistic achievement and strong community engagement.

Cover Photos:

Left: Pacific Opera Victoria's production of *Falstaff* (2013). Rachel Fenlon as Nannetta; Colin Ainsworth as Fenton. Photo David Cooper

Right upper: Nicola Lipman (as Nora Chase) in Belfry Theatre's production of *Let Me Call You Sweetheart* (Book and Lyrics by Bruce Ruddell/ Music & Lyrics by Bill Henderson). Photo: David Cooper

Right middle: Media clipping collage from 2013 DOXA Documentary Film Festival. Photo: Alina Ilyasova

Right lower: Jermaine Spivey and Cindy Salgado in Kidd Pivot's production of *The Tempest Replica*. Photo: Jörg Baumann

Phone: 250 356-1718
Fax: 250 387-4099
Email:
BCArtsCouncil@gov.bc.ca

Mailing Address:
PO Box 9819, Stn Prov Govt
Victoria, B.C. V8W 9W3

Street Address:
800 Johnson Street
Victoria, B.C. V8W 1N3